

American Traditions
Robert Mills, piano
Judy May, mezzo-soprano
Tod Fitzpatrick, baritone
Nancy Buck, viola

Program

from Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson

- I. There came a wind like a bugle
- II. The world feels dusty
- III. Dear March, come in!
- IV. Heart, we will forget him
- V. Going to Heaven!

Aaron Copland
(1900-1990)

Judy May, mezzo-soprano

A Journey after Loves

[A song cycle for baritone and piano]

- I. ripe years redden
- II. flowers wither
- III. my memories
- IV. all roads lead to you
- V. I choked on your body
- VI. I gave myself away
- VII. my life is torn into strophes
- VIII. now I stand in the wind

Virko Baley
(b. 1938)

Tod Fitzpatrick, baritone

INTERMISSION

Quatre poèmes, Op. 5

[for voice, viola and piano]

- I. La cloche fêlée
- II. Dansons la gigue!
- III. Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois
- IV. Sérénade

Charles Martin Loeffler
(1861-1935)

Judy May, mezzo-soprano
Nancy Buck, viola

Quatre Ronsard Mélodies

- I. Quand je te vois, seule...
- II. Bonjour, mon coeur
- III. À sa guitar
- IV. Je suis homme, né pour mourir

Judith Cloud

Tod Fitzpatrick, baritone

Program Notes

A Journey After Loves by Virko Baley

Baley's use of the voice takes on a poetic sensibility in A Journey after Loves, a song cycle for baritone and piano clearly inspired by Leos Janacek's Diary of One Who Vanished. For his first song cycle, Baley uses texts by the Ukrainian-American poet Bohdan Boychuck, who previously wrote the libretto for Baley's as-yet unproduced opera, The Hunger. Although Baley's Journey uses an English translation, the setting reflects much of the text's original character, or as the composer explains, "resonating a Slavic soundscape in English." With the piano as a guide, the soloist steadily navigates several abrupt transitions in the text—a linguistic display which fully matches Baley's music in charting bleak emotional landscapes in a language of folkloric modernism.

Translations

Two French Song Cycles (after intermission)

Quatre poemes, Opus 5 by Charles Martin Loeffler and Quatre Ronsard Melodies by Judith Cloud

Quatre poemes, Opus 5 by Charles Martin Loeffler

The cracked bell (La cloche fêlée)

It is bitter and sweet, during winter nights,
To listen, by the fire that flickers and smokes,
To long-distant memories slowly rising
At the sound of the bells chiming in the mist.

Happy is that bell with the vigorous throat,
Which, in spite of its age, is alert and healthy,
And faithfully sends forth its religious cry,
Like some old soldier on watch in his tent.

As for me, my soul is cracked; and when in its troubles
It wants to fill the cold night air with its songs,
It often happens that its weakened voice

Seems like the thick gasp of a wounded man, forgotten
Beside a lake of blood, underneath a large heap of dead,
And who dies, without moving, with immense effort.

On with the dancing! (Dansons la gigue!)

Above all else I loved her eyes,
That shone like stars in midnight skies;
No malice in them you'd surprise.

On with the dancing!

She had a way with her, I swear,
To drive poor lovers to despair,
That was delightful, I declare.

On with the dancing!

But now I know that what was best,
Was when her flower-like mouth she pressed
To mine. She died upon her breast.

On with the dancing!

I mind them well, I mind them well –
Those hours, and many a happy spell;
Best luck that ever me befell.

On with the dancing!

The sound of the horn is wailing near the woods (Le son du cor s'afflige vers les bois)

The sound of the horn is wailing near the woods
with a sort of orphan-like grief
which dies away at the foot of the hill
where the north wind desperately roams.

The soul of the wolf is weeping in that voice
which rises with the sun that sinks
with an agony that seems somehow soothing
and gives simultaneous delight and distress.

To enhance this drowsy lament
the snow is falling as long strips of linen
across the blood-red sunset,
and the air seems to be an autumn sigh,
so gentle is this monotonous evening
in which a slow landscape coddles itself.

Serenade

Like the voice of a dead body that might
Sing from the depth of its grave,
Mistress, listen to my voice, harsh and out of tune,
Rising up to your refuge.

Open your soul and your ear to the sound
Of the mandolin:
For you, for you, have I made this song,
Cruel and wheedling.

I will sing of your gold and onyx eyes,
Pure of all shadows,
Then of the Lethe of your breast, then the Styx
Of your dark hair.

Like the voice of a dead body that might
Sing from the depth of its grave,
Mistress, listen to my voice, harsh and out of tune,
Rising up to your refuge.

Then I shall laud highly, as necessary,
This blessed body
Whose opulent perfume comes back to me
On sleepless nights.

And to finish, I shall sing of the kiss
Of your red lips,
And your sweetness in making a martyr of me,
My angel, my gouge!

Open your soul and your ear to the sound
Of the mandolin:
For you, for you, have I made this song,
Cruel and wheedling.

Quatre Ronsard Melodies by Judith Cloud

When I see you sitting all by yourself

(Quand je te vois, seule....)

When I see you sitting all by yourself,
engrossed in your thoughts,
with your head somewhat lowered,
withdrawn from the crowd and from me,

then I often want to greet you, to interrupt
your moodiness; but my weakened voice,
excessively fearful, stays back
in my mouth, leaving me mute.

I cannot stand the brilliance of your appearance;
my soul quivers timorously in my body;
my tongue and vocal cords do not function.

Only my sighs, only my sad face
speak for me; and such passion
gives sufficient evidence of my love.

Hail, my heart (Bonjour, mon Coeur)

Hail, my heart;
hail, my sweet life;
hail, my eye;
hail, my dear friend.

Hail, oh hail, my beauty,
my sweetheart;
hail, my sweet one,
my love,
my sweet spring,
my delicate new flower,
my sweet pleasure,
my gentle little dove,
my sparrow, my turtledove!
Hail, my sweet rebel.

À sa guitar

My guitar, I sing to you
Whom alone I disappear
I disappoint, I break, I enchant
The loves that I receive

At the sound of your harmony
I refresh my warmth
My warmth, an infinite flame
Born of a beautiful unhappiness.

I am a man born to die

(Je suis homme, né pour mourir)

I am a man born to die.
I am certain that
I cannot save myself from death,
from descending into death.
Well I know the years I have had,
but those that are to come,
good or bad, I do not know,
nor when my age shall end.

Flee, confusion
that gnaws at my heart at all costs.
Flee far from me.
I have nothing to do with you,
unless, before I die,
some day I may
play and jump, laugh and dance,
with Bacchus and Love